

Knights Place Farm, Watling
Street, Cobham, Rochester,
Kent, ME2 3UB

Planning Statement

Client: KPF Developments Ltd

JAC/CC/38421

September 2026



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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1	PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT	4
1.2	APPLICATION DOCUMENTS	4
2	SITE CONTEXT	5
2.1	THE SITE	5
	Proposal Context	5
2.2	SURROUNDING CONTEXT	7
2.3	POLICY DESIGNATIONS	7
3	PLANNING HISTORY	9
4	THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	10
4.1	OVERVIEW	10
4.2	LAYOUT, DESIGN AND SCALE	10
	Layout	10
	Design and Scale.....	11
4.3	ACCESS	12
4.4	HERITAGE ASSESSMENT	14
	Knights Place Farmhouse	14
	Cobham Hall	14
	Assessment and Conclusion	15
5	PLANNING POLICY	16
5.1	OVERVIEW	16
5.2	GRAVESHAM LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY (2014)	16
5.3	NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (DECEMBER 2024)	16
5.4	DRAFT GRAVESHAM LOCAL PLAN (REGULATION 19)	18
6	PLANNING ASSESSMENT	19
6.1	INTRODUCTION	19
6.2	PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT / IMPACT ON THE GREEN BELT	19
6.3	HERITAGE IMPACT	20
6.4	AMENITY IMPACT	20
6.5	BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN	21
7	SUMMARY & CONCLUSION	22
7.1	SUMMARY	22
7.2	PLANNING BALANCE	22
7.3	CONCLUSION.....	23

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT

- 1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of the applicant, KPF Developments Ltd, in respect of a planning application submitted to Gravesham Borough Council (hereby referred to as 'the Council' or 'GBC') in respect of an application for full planning permission for the following works at Knights Place Farm, Watling Street, Cobham, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3UB:

'Siting of a Forestry Building within existing woodyard, use of land for general storage (B8) on land to the south of Knights Place Farm, and continued use of yard 3 for Class B8 (Retrospective)'.

- 1.1.2 This Planning Statement provides a detailed overview of the Site, its relevant planning history, the development proposal and the applicable Local Plan policies, the National Planning Policy Framework, and any supplementary planning documents or other material considerations.
- 1.1.3 This Planning Statement concludes that the proposed development is appropriate in planning terms. As such, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.

1.2 APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

- 1.2.1 This application should be read in conjunction with the following plans and documents:

DOCUMENT REFERENCE	DOCUMENT NAME	AUTHOR
	Application Form	DHA Planning
DHA/38421	Planning Statement	DHA Planning
PLANS		
2615783	Elevation Drawings	Omega Geo
2615783	Topographical Survey	Omega Geo
DHA/38421/01	Site Location Plan	DHA Design
DHA/38421/02	Existing Proposed Plan and Elevations	DHA Design

TABLE 1.1: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & DRAWINGS

2 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 THE SITE

- 2.1.1 The site is located to the south of the M2, west of the built confines of Strood and to the east of Rochester and Cobham Golf Club. The site falls outside of any defined settlement boundary and is therefore, in planning terms, within the defined countryside. The site is accessed from the north via a slip road off Watling Street before joining the M2. The site comprises the forestry building and access track, which is the subject of this application.



FIGURE 2.1: APPROXIMATE SITE LOCATION PLAN (COURTESY OF GOOGLE EARTH)

- 2.1.2 The wider Knights Place Farm site comprises a number of residential properties, as well as an equestrian premises and a forestry building, which is the subject of this application. The part of the site in which the forestry building is located is bounded by dense woodland. The purpose of the forestry building is for the storage of wood and equipment associated with the maintenance of this woodland as well as the production of fencing, posts, edging boards and logs.

Proposal Context

- 2.1.3 This proposal relates to works that have been undertaken within the existing woodyard area within the overall demise of Knights Place Farm. The proposal also seeks retrospective permission for use of the land for general storage (B8).
- 2.1.4 The Estate ownership and woodland extends to approximately 40 hectares (100 acres) and largely comprises coppice with some Oak and Ash standards within it. The site owner has been in discussions with the Forestry Commission and have agreed to undertake appropriate woodland management to seek to bring the woodland back into good order. As part of this, the site owner is looking to agree a forestry management plan for the site. Related evidence is attached as

Appendix 1. This shows an email from the Forestry Commission stating that the Applicant's application for a felling licence is to be recommended to be granted.

- 2.1.5 In undertaking woodland management, the owner is felling coppice and then using the felled timber to create post and rail fencing and other products to demarcate the paths and rides within the woodland area. Excess timber and off-cuts are to be logged, stored, used and sold.
- 2.1.6 As part of this, it has been necessary to construct a temporary scaffold structure to allow the preparation of timber and split the felled coppice to produce the post and rail fencing. The cover also allows the drying or seasoning of cut-off and other timber for use and sale. Attached at **Appendix 2** is a statement from Lucas Arborist Ltd that explains the nature of the work.
- 2.1.7 The woodyard and Yard 3 have been in use for more than 10 years and the woodyard is essential for the ongoing management of the woodland. The retrospective change of use of this land to allow for its use as general storage (B8), will support the site's continued use of woodland management.
- 2.1.8 The building is open-sided and constructed of scaffolding with a plastic sheet covering. The building sits within a clearing in the wood but below canopy level such that it cannot be seen from public vantage points.
- 2.1.9 It should be noted that the fencing is being utilised along several kilometres of access tracks and walkways. The split rail fencing is as shown in the photos below.
- 2.1.10 Class E of Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO (as amended) provides rights for the erection of buildings for Forestry purposes. The Class also provides for the formation of Private Ways and operations on that land, or on land held or occupied with that land, to obtain the materials required for the formation, alteration or maintenance of such ways. It is the case that if Prior Approval had been sought the building would have been permitted development.

Site Location and general description.

- 2.1.11 It is noted that the site lies within the National Landscape and Green Belt with Ancient Woodland lying to the North and South of the building, albeit significantly further than 15m away, the normal stand-off distance. The Ancient Woodland is shown by the darker green colours in the image below.

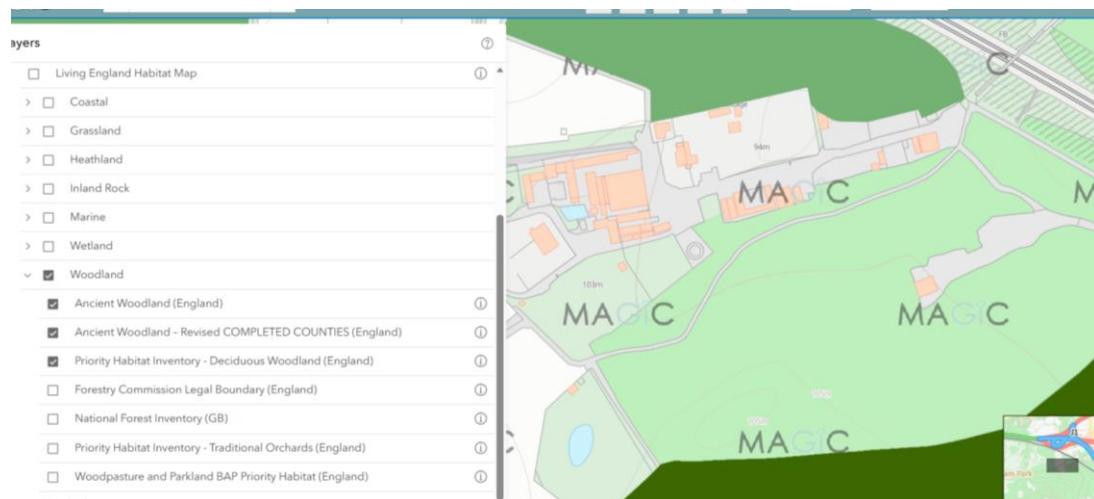


FIGURE 2.2: ANCIENT WOODLAND LOCATION (COURTESY OF MAGIC MAPS).

- 2.1.12 The building sits within an estate containing Knights Place and a group of farm buildings. Knights Place is Statutorily Listed but there is no intervisibility between the heritage assets and the forestry building.

2.2 SURROUNDING CONTEXT

- 2.2.1 The site forms part of the wider Knights Place Farm, which comprises a number of residential properties, as well as an equestrian centre and associated equestrian premises.
- 2.2.2 In terms of the surrounding area, the built confines of Strood and Rochester are located in close proximity to the east of the site, with Strood located approximately 600m to the east. To the south, the built confines of Cuxton are located approximately 1.7km from the site. To the west, Rochester and Cobham Park Golf Club adjoins the site, separated by approximately 130m of woodland. Lastly, the M2 is located to the north of the site, accessible via the Knights Place Farm access track.

2.3 POLICY DESIGNATIONS

- 2.3.1 The site falls within the Kent Downs National Landscape and also within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The land itself is also classified as Grade 1 Agricultural Land, which is the highest grading for agricultural land, representing 'excellent quality'.
- 2.3.2 To the south, an area of woodland designated as Great Wood Ancient woodland, North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve and Cobham Woods SSSI is located approximately 75m south of the site. Approximately 240m to the north, there is a Grade II listed building (Knights Place Farmhouse), which forms part of Knights Place Farm. In addition to this, Cobham Hall Grade II* listed Park and Garden is located approximately 590m to the west.
- 2.3.3 Aside from the above, the site is not within a Conservation Area and is located within Flood Zone 1 with no surface water flood risk. A Public Right of Way runs

through Knights Pace Farm to the north (from east to west) under ref. NS182. This adjoins Public Right of Way ref. NS363, which runs south from Knights Place Farm.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1.1 According to GBC’s online planning history database, the following applications are associated with the site:

REFERENCE	DECISION DATE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
20161232	04/09/2017	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the continued use of land and erection of buildings for Class B8 storage.	Refused
19980565	10/11/1998	Removal of top and subsoil from site and translocation of woodland soil to site for creation of new woodland.	Approved

TABLE 3.1: PLANNING HISTORY OF THE SITE (ACCORDING TO GBC’S ONLINE PLANNING DATABASE)

4 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 OVERVIEW

- 4.1.1 The applicant for the proposed development seeks planning permission for the following works:

'Siting of a Forestry Building within existing woodyard, use of land for general storage (B8) on land to the south of Knights Place Farm, and continued use of yard 3 for Class B8 (Retrospective)'.

4.2 LAYOUT, DESIGN AND SCALE

Layout

- 4.2.1 The proposed forestry building is sited on land to the north of Knights Place Farm. Given the retrospective nature of the proposal, the forestry building itself has already been constructed. Its precise location is to the western corner of the woodyard, as shown below in Figure 4.1. The building is also located on an elevated section of the site, as shown below in Figure 4.2.

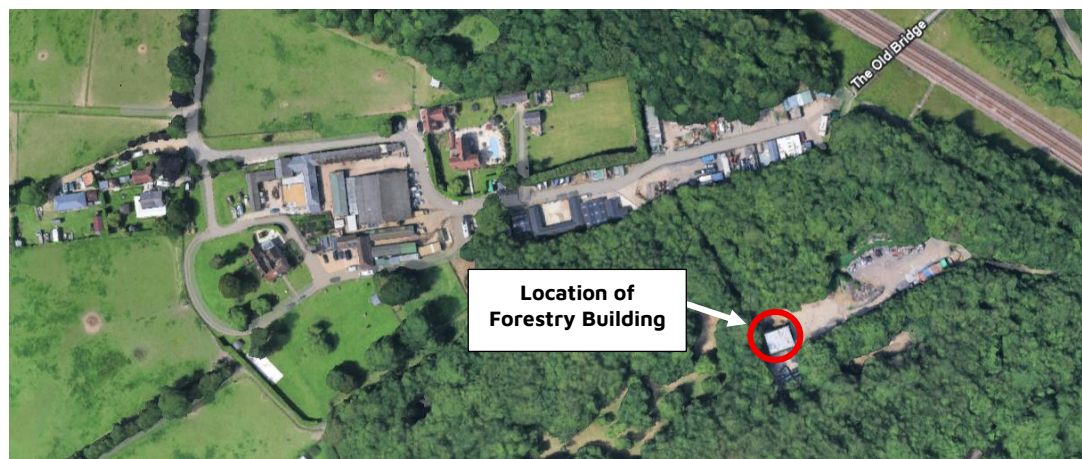


FIGURE 4.1: LOCATION OF FORESTRY BUILDING (GOOGLE EARTH)



FIGURE 4.2: SITE PHOTO OF FORESTRY BUILDING

- 4.2.2 In addition to this, the proposal also seeks permission for the use of the land as general storage (B8). This storage area is also utilised for woodland management of the site in connection with the proposed forestry building. The location of this storage is within the yard to the east of the proposed forestry building as shown below in Figure 4.3.

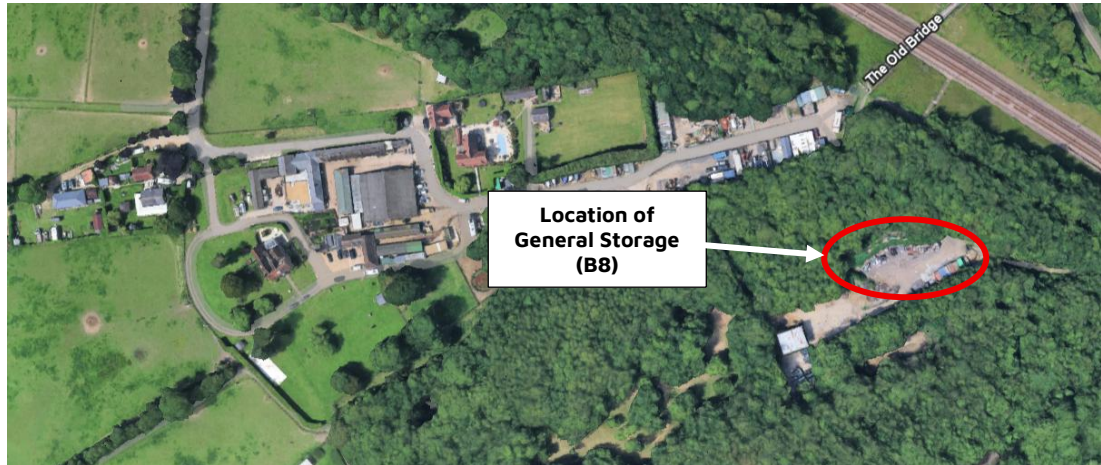


FIGURE 4.3: LOCATION OF STORAGE AREA

- 4.2.3 In addition to this, the proposal also seeks retrospective permission for the continued use of Yard 3 for B8 use. Permission was previously refused for this under 20161232. Permission has already been granted for yards 1 and 2. It is clear that the yard has now been in use for in excess of ten years such that it is Lawful in any event.



FIGURE 4.4: YARD 3 LOCATION (EXTRACT OF PLAN FROM APPLICATION 20161232)

Design and Scale

- 4.2.4 In terms of design, the forestry building comprises adjoined buildings, which ultimately form one larger building. This building has three openings, which are open at all times. This is shown in the elevations below. Within the building itself, there is space for storage of wood and equipment associated with the woodland management on site.

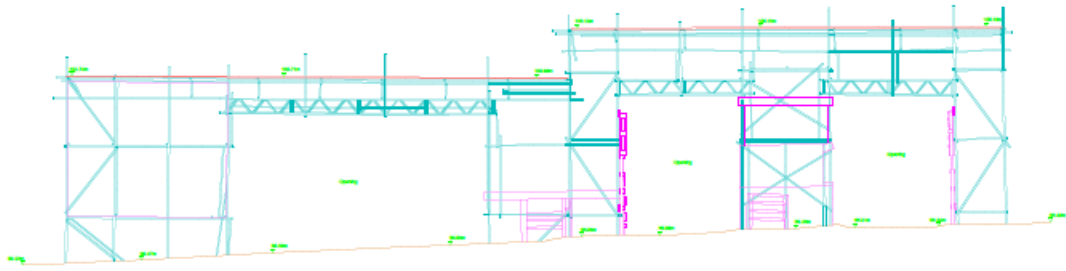


FIGURE 4.5: EXTRACT OF ELEVATIONS OF THE FORESTRY BUILDING

- 4.2.5 In terms of materials, the building is constructed of scaffolding with plastic sheet covering.
- 4.2.6 In terms of scale, the building measures approximately 7.8m in width, 27.5m in length, and 4.5m in height.

4.3 ACCESS

- 4.3.1 Access to the forestry building is taken from the north via an existing, established access track, as shown below in Figures 4.5 and 4.6.

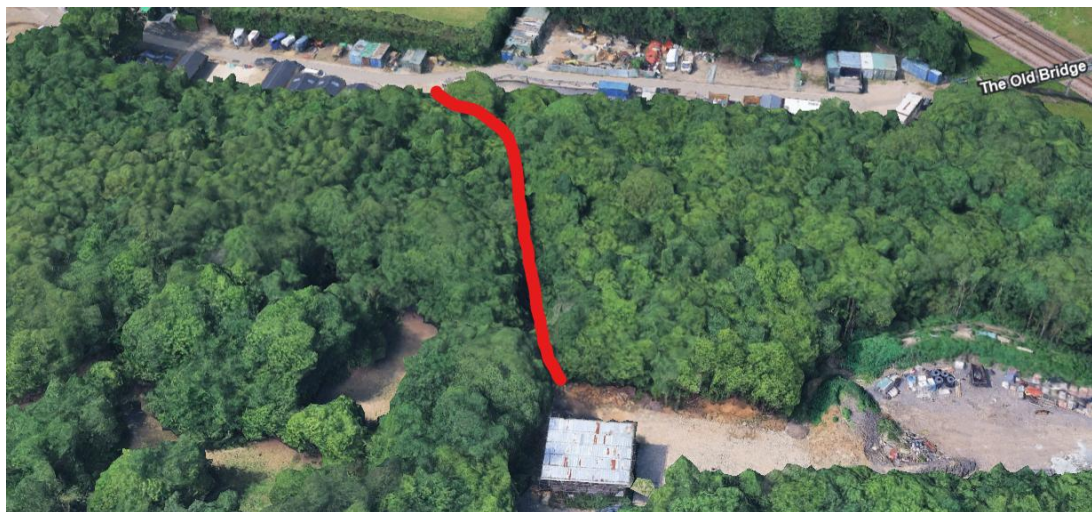


FIGURE 4.6: ILLUSTRATION OF EXISTING ACCESS TRACK (GOOGLE EARTH)

- 4.3.2 As stated, the timber is being utilised to demarcate walks and rides within the woodland as shown below.



FIGURE 4.7: PHOTOS OF EXISTING ACCESS TRACK

4.4 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

- 4.4.1 It is recognised that there are a number of heritage assets which are in relatively close proximity to the site. An extract from Historic England's Map Search shows the site (outlined in red), and the locations of the two nearby heritage assets that are considered as part of this assessment. These assets are the Grade II listed property, Knights Place Farmhouse and Cobham Hall, a Grade II* listed Park and Garden.

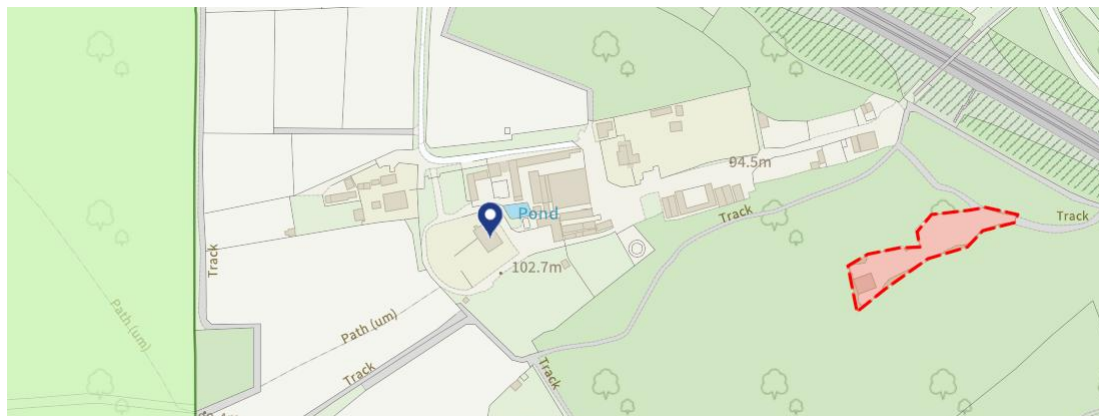


FIGURE 4.8: EXTRACT SHOWING NEARBY HERITAGE ASSETS (HISTORIC ENGLAND MAP SEARCH)

Knights Place Farmhouse

- 4.4.2 Knights Place Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building which was first listed on 21st November 1966 under List Entry Number 1373832. The property is described as a brick-faced, tiled gabled roof, L-shaped block with later infill. The property also has casement windows with mullions and leaded lights on the south front elevation.
- 4.4.3 The property is located approximately 240m to the north of the site of which approximately 140m of that distance is dense woodland. The dense woodland separates the site from this property, providing natural screening and preventing intervisibility between the site and the asset. As a result, we consider that the proposal would not result in harm to the listed asset or its setting.

Cobham Hall

- 4.4.4 Cobham Hall is a Grade II* listed Park and Garden which was first listed on 01st May 1986 under List Entry Number 1000182.
- 4.4.5 Cobham Hall is a historically significant estate, which has origins dating back to the medieval period. The estate comprises the Grade I listed Cobham Hall, formal terraced gardens, pleasure grounds, historic parkland, woodland, a former deer park, kitchen gardens, ornamental water features, and a number of associated structures including the Gothic Dairy, The Mount, and Wyatt's Mausoleum.
- 4.4.6 The estate is located approximately 590m to the west of the site, of which approximately 140m of that distance is dense woodland. The dense woodland again separates the site from the estate, providing natural screening and

preventing intervisibility between the site and the asset. As a result, we consider that the proposal would not result in harm to the listed asset or its setting.

Assessment and Conclusion

- 4.4.7 We understand that significant heritage assets are located within close proximity to the site as demonstrated above. An assessment of the sites context with these assets highlights that dense woodland which bounds the site on all sides, separates the site from both heritage assets and provides natural screening, and preventing intervisibility between the site and the assets.
- 4.4.8 In conclusion, for this reason, we consider that the proposal would not result in harm to the listed assets or their settings.

5 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 OVERVIEW

- 5.1.1 Under the provisions of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.1.2 This section sets out the relevant policies of the Local Development Plan and other relevant material considerations. For the purposes of this application, the Gravesham Development Plan comprises:
- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and Local Plan Policies Map (2014)
 - Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) – saved Policies
 - Kent County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2024-30 (adopted March 2025)
- 5.1.3 In addition to the Development Plan, the Government’s updated National Planning Policy Framework, which was revised in August 2026, will be considered.

5.2 GRAVESHAM LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY (2014)

- 5.2.1 The Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 was adopted in September 2024 and sets out the Council’s policies for development control.
- 5.2.2 In relation to this, the policies from the Local Plan which are most pertinent to this case are as follows.
- **Policy CS01** – Sustainable Development
 - **Policy CS11** – Transport
 - **Policy CS19** – Development & Design Principles
 - **Policy CS20** – Heritage and the Historic Environment

5.3 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (AUGUST 2026)

- 5.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration and sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. The Framework was revised in August 2026.
- 5.3.2 The following policies from the NPPF 2026 are considered relevant to the proposed development:

Achieving sustainable development

- 5.3.3 **Policy S1** confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The proposal supports the continued management of woodland and the productive use of land associated with an existing rural enterprise.
- 5.3.4 **Policy S2** sets out the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development. Of particular relevance are the economic objective of supporting a strong and responsive economy and the environmental objective of protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Decision-making

- 5.3.5 **Policy DM1** requires decision-makers to approach planning decisions in a positive and creative way and to work proactively with applicants to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
- 5.3.6 **Policy DM4** confirms that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

- 5.3.7 **Policy E4** supports the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses and the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. This is directly relevant to the continued woodland management and forestry-related activities at the site.

Promoting sustainable transport

- 5.3.8 **Policy TR6** provides that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe.

Making effective use of land

- 5.3.9 **Policy L1** requires planning decisions to promote the effective use of land while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. The proposal makes use of an established woodyard and existing storage areas associated with woodland management.

Protecting Green Belt land

- 5.3.10 **Policy GB1** states that great importance is attached to Green Belts and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

- 5.3.11 **Policy GB2** identifies the purposes of the Green Belt, including safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and preserving the setting and special character of historic towns.
- 5.3.12 **Policy GB5** identifies forms of development in the Green Belt which are not inappropriate, including buildings for agriculture and forestry. This is particularly relevant to this case as the proposed forestry building and its relationship with woodland management activities are clearly classified as appropriate development.
- 5.3.13 **Policy GB7** confirms that where development in the Green Belt is not inappropriate, it should not be regarded as harmful to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. This is relevant to the proposal because the forestry building is directly associated with woodland management and is therefore to be assessed as an appropriate form of Green Belt development, subject to consideration of its site-specific impacts.
- 5.3.14 As to the yard area, it is clear that criteria (e) allows for the redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. In this case the evidence is clear that the site has been in yard based use for more than ten years and is therefore Lawful.
- 5.3.15 As a consequence the site qualifies as PDL and the proposal represents appropriate development.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 5.3.16 **Policy NE1** requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, including by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and seeking net gains for biodiversity where appropriate.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 5.3.17 **Policy HE1** confirms that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.
- 5.3.18 **Policy HE3** requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. This is relevant given the proximity of Knights Place Farmhouse and Cobham Hall Registered Park and Garden.

5.4 DRAFT GRAVESHAM LOCAL PLAN (REGULATION 19)

- 5.4.1 The Emerging Local Plan for Gravesham is currently at Regulation 19 stage. A draft Local Plan is yet to be published. Therefore, at this stage, we consider that this plan will hold limited weight in decision-making.

6 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.1.2 In determining whether the proposal accords with the development plan, the following issues are considered:
- Principle of Development / Impact on the Green Belt
 - Heritage Impact
 - Amenity Impact
 - Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

6.2 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT / IMPACT ON THE GREEN BELT

- 6.2.1 In terms of principle, Policy CS02 of the Local Plan states that '*development outside settlements, including proposals to maintain and diversify the rural economy, will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in this plan*'.
- 6.2.2 In relation to this, the proposal comprises the retrospective siting of a forestry building and proposed use of land for general storage (B8), associated with the use of the site for forestry purposes. The proposal is located within a woodyard area, within the woodland with which it is associated. The proposal will allow for the maintenance of the surrounding forest and woodland and will therefore support the maintenance of the forestry enterprise of the site and is thus compliant with Policy CS02 in this regard.
- 6.2.3 The support afforded to rural development by this policy is, however, also dependent on compatibility with national policies for protecting the Green Belt. In this regard, section 5.3 of this Statement identifies NPPF 2026 Policies GB5 and GB7 as being directly relevant. Policy GB5 confirms that buildings for agriculture and forestry are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt, while Policy GB7 confirms that where development in the Green Belt is not inappropriate, it should not be regarded as harmful to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. This application proposes the siting of a building which is used for forestry purposes within a clearing in the woods used for forestry management. We therefore consider that the proposal represents appropriate development in the Green Belt, in line with Policies GB5 and GB7 of the NPPF 2026.
- 6.2.4 Furthermore, Class E of Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO (as amended) provides rights for the erection of buildings for Forestry purposes. Given that the proposal would fall into this category, we also consider that, irrespective of the above, the proposal would have been allowed under these permitted development rights.

- 6.2.5 The small scale area of storage shown as Yard Three has clearly been in use for open storage for more than ten years and is already Lawful. As such it qualifies as PDL and is also appropriate development.
- 6.2.6 In conclusion, the principle of this development is supported by Policy CS02 and is also considered an acceptable form of development within the Green Belt in line with Policies GB5 and GB7 of the NPPF 2026. Nevertheless, permitted development rights allow for the nature of the proposed development. In light of this, we therefore consider that the principle of this development is acceptable and compliant with local and national policy.

6.3 HERITAGE IMPACT

- 6.3.1 Policy CS20 of the Local Plan states that *'the Council will accord a high priority towards the preservation, protection and enhancement of its heritage and historic environment as a non-renewable resource'*. It also states that *'proposals and initiatives will be supported which preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets, their setting where it contributes to the significance of the asset and their interpretation and enjoyment'*.
- 6.3.2 In relation to this, and as outlined in the heritage assessment included within this statement, there are a number of heritage assets in close proximity to the site. These assets are the Grade II listed property, Knights Place Farmhouse and Cobham Hall, a Grade II* listed Park and Garden.
- 6.3.3 The site is located approximately 240m to the south of Knights Place Farmhouse and approximately 590m east of Cobham Hall. Approximately 140m of dense woodland and forest separate the site from both of these assets, providing natural screening and preventing intervisibility between the site and the assets.
- 6.3.4 As a result, we consider that the proposal would not result in harm to the fabric or setting of the listed assets and would comply with Policy CS20 in this regard.

6.4 AMENITY IMPACT

- 6.4.1 Policy CS19 states that *'new development will be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land'*.
- 6.4.2 In relation to this, neighbouring residential properties are located to the north of the site, the closest being approximately 150m from the site. Approximately 140m of dense woodland and forest separate the site from these neighbouring properties, providing natural screening and preventing intervisibility between the site and the properties.
- 6.4.3 We therefore consider that there is sufficient separation distance and screening between the site and the nearest neighbouring properties and that, as a result, the proposal would not result in harm to the amenity of any neighbouring property and is thus compliant with Policy CS19 in this regard. In any event, the manufacture of fencing and related forestry work will take place irrespective of whether the building is retained.

6.5 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

- 6.5.1 Policy CS12 states that *'there will be no net loss of biodiversity in the Borough, and opportunities to enhance, restore, re-create and maintain habitats will be sought'*.
- 6.5.2 In relation to this, the Environment Act 2021 sets out a legislative requirement for development proposals to meet a 10% net gain in biodiversity on-site. There are, however, exemptions to this requirement, including retrospective applications, which are fully exempt from meeting this requirement.
- 6.5.3 Given the retrospective nature of this application, we consider that there is no need for this proposal to meet this requirement, and as such, there is no conflict with policy CS12, nor the Environment Act 2021.
- 6.5.4 In any event, the works have been undertaken within an existing woodyard where the operations were already being undertaken.

7 SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

7.1 SUMMARY

- 7.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of the applicant, KPF Developments Ltd, in support of a full planning application for the following works at Knights Place Farm, Watling Street, Cobham, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3UB:

'Siting of a Forestry Building within existing woodyard, use of land for general storage (B8) on land to the south of Knights Place Farm, and continued use of yard 3 for Class B8 (Retrospective).'

- 7.1.2 In summary, the scheme comprises the following:

- Application for retrospective siting of agricultural/forestry building, associated with the maintenance of the woodland and forest at Knights Place Farm.
- Use of land as woodyard and for general storage (B8), associated with the maintenance of the woodland and forest at Knights Place Farm.
- Continued use of yard 3 for Class B8.

7.2 PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.2.1 In line with the NPPF 2026, the presumption in favour of sustainable development and tilted balance applies, which tilts the balance in favour of granting permission unless any policies within the Development Plan and NPPF 2026 which protect designated assets or areas provide a clear reason for permission being refused, or unless any adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Development Plan and Framework taken as a whole. In this respect, the principle of this proposal is considered acceptable in local policy terms, as well as being compliant with national policy and being supported by permitted development rights. There are potential harms from the development, primarily the impact on the green belt and nearby heritage assets, as well as amenity impacts to neighbouring residential properties, however, these have been appropriately addressed, as demonstrated, and as such do not weigh against the proposal.

- 7.2.2 In respect of this, for the reasons explained below, the proposal complies with the development plan:

- The principle of the proposed development complies with Policy CS02, being that it maintains the rural nature of the site and is also compliant with national policy, being that it is an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt.
- In terms of principle, Class E of Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO (as amended) provides rights for the erection of buildings for Forestry purposes and is therefore acceptable in this regard.

- The proposal would not have a detrimental impact on nearby heritage assets as there is adequate separation distance between the site and these assets as well as dense woodland and forest which provide natural screening and prevent intervisibility. It is therefore, compliant with Policy CS20 of the Local Plan.
- The proposal would not result in harm to the amenity of any neighbouring property as there is sufficient separation distance and screening between the site and the nearest neighbouring properties. It is therefore compliant with Policy CS19 in this regard.
- Given the retrospective nature of this application, there is no need for the proposal to meet the 10% biodiversity net gain requirement. As such, there is no conflict with policy CS12, nor the Environment Act 2021.

7.3 CONCLUSION

- 7.3.1 The proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant planning policies, and there are no material considerations that justify the refusal of planning permission, or that outweigh the benefits of the development.
- 7.3.2 The overall principle of the proposal is considered acceptable, and other matters that may result in harm have been appropriately addressed as demonstrated. As such, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted without delay.

APPENDIX

1



From: Vikram Sahdev [REDACTED]
Date: 22 June 2026 at 16:32:58 BST
To: Mark Lucas [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: 019/1786/2026 Knights Place Farm – Felling Licence Conditions

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Smith, Laura" [REDACTED]
Date: 1 June 2026 at 09:46:22 BST
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: 019/1786/2026 Knights Place Farm – Felling Licence Conditions

Dear Mr Sahdev,

I will be recommending that your application for a felling licence is granted subject to a number of conditions.

Please review the conditions presented below:

Felling Licence Application (Forestry Act 1967)

Application Ref: 019/1786/2026

Property – Knights Place Farm

The following conditions will apply to the licenced felling in Knights Place Farm and will be part of the agreement between the Forestry Commission and Mr Mark Lucas.

Condition C: Restock by Natural Regeneration or Coppice.

The following conditions apply to the licenced felling in 4.

1. The land on which the felling took place is to be managed in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry so as to secure restocking with 70% sweet chestnut 30% native broadleaves to achieve not less than 1100 stools per hectare evenly distributed over the site by coppice regrowth.
2. All licenced trees felled are to be removed quickly and carefully so as to avoid damage to the remaining tree stumps, seedlings or coppice shoots.
3. The land is to be adequately prepped and weeded to facilitate natural regeneration or coppice regrowth (as specified under condition 1 above). Any preparation or weeding must be done in a way so as not to damage existing trees, of any age, on site.
4. If before 30th June 2 years after felling where natural regeneration fails, or coppice stools fail (as specified under condition 1 above) to establish the minimum stocking density, the land is to be planted or sown before 30th June 3 years after felling in order to secure a stocking density of not less than 1100 stools per hectare of 70% sweet chestnut 30% native broadleaves evenly distributed over the site.
5. For a period of 10 years from the restocking:
 - a. The plants must be protected against damage and be adequately weeded.
 - b. Any failure or losses should be replaced as necessary to provide a stocking of not less than 1100 stools per hectare evenly distributed over the site.
 - c. Any stem/stools subject to the conditions of this licence must be properly maintained in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry.

Condition C: Restock by Natural Regeneration or Coppice.

The following conditions apply to the licenced felling in two.

1. The land on which the felling took place is to be managed in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry so as to secure restocking with 80% sweet chestnut 10% hornbeam 05% native broadleaves 05% birch (downy/silver) to achieve not less than 1100 stools per hectare evenly distributed over the site by coppice regrowth.
2. All licenced trees felled are to be removed quickly and carefully so as to avoid damage to the remaining tree stumps, seedlings or coppice shoots.
3. The land is to be adequately prepped and weeded to facilitate natural regeneration or coppice regrowth (as specified under condition 1 above). Any preparation or weeding must be done in a way so as not to damage existing trees, of any age, on site.
4. If before 30th June 2 years after felling the restocking described in 1. above is not achieved then the land is to be planted or sown before 30th June 3 years after felling in order to secure a stocking of not less than 1100 stools per hectare of 80% sweet chestnut 10% hornbeam 05% native broadleaves 05% birch (downy/silver) evenly distributed over the site.
5. For a period of 10 years from the restocking:
 - a. The plants must be protected against damage and be adequately weeded.
 - b. Any failure or losses should be replaced as necessary to provide a stocking of not less than 1100 stools per hectare evenly distributed over the site.
 - c. Any stem/stools subject to the conditions of this licence must be properly maintained in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry.

Condition C: Restock by Natural Regeneration or Coppice.

The following conditions apply to the licenced felling in 1.

1. The land on which the felling took place is to be managed in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry so as to secure restocking with 80% sweet chestnut 20% native broadleaves to achieve not less than 1100 stools per hectare evenly distributed over the site by coppice regrowth.
 2. All licenced trees felled are to be removed quickly and carefully so as to avoid damage to the remaining tree stumps, seedlings or coppice shoots.
 3. The land is to be adequately prepped and weeded to facilitate natural regeneration or coppice regrowth (as specified under condition 1 above). Any preparation or weeding must be done in a way so as not to damage existing trees, of any age, on site.
 4. If before 30th June 2 years after felling the restocking described in 1. above is not achieved then the land is to be planted or sown before 30th June 3 years after felling in order to secure a stocking of not less than 1100 stools per hectare of 80% sweet chestnut 20% native broadleaves evenly distributed over the site.
 5. For a period of 10 years from the restocking:
 - a. The plants must be protected against damage and be adequately weeded.
 - b. Any failure or losses should be replaced as necessary to provide a stocking of not less than 1100 stools per hectare evenly distributed over the site.
 - c. Any stem/stools subject to the conditions of this licence must be properly maintained in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry.
-

Condition C: Restock by Natural Regeneration or Coppice.

The following conditions apply to the licenced felling in 3.

1. The land on which the felling took place is to be managed in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry so as to secure restocking with 70% sycamore 30% native broadleaves to achieve not less than 1100 stems per hectare evenly distributed over the site by 100% natural regeneration
2. All licenced trees felled are to be removed quickly and carefully so as to avoid damage to the remaining tree stumps, seedlings or coppice shoots.
3. The land is to be adequately prepped and weeded to facilitate natural regeneration or coppice regrowth (as specified under condition 1 above). Any preparation or weeding must be done in a way so as not to damage existing trees, of any age, on site.
4. If before 30th June 2 years after felling the restocking described in 1. above is not achieved then the land is to be planted or sown before 30th June 3 years after felling in order to secure a stocking of not less than 1100 stems per hectare of 70% sycamore 30% native broadleaves evenly distributed over the site.
5. For a period of 10 years from the restocking:
 - a. The plants must be protected against damage and be adequately weeded.
 - b. Any failure or losses should be replaced as necessary to provide a stocking of not less than 1100 stems per hectare evenly distributed over the site.
 - c. Any stem/stools subject to the conditions of this licence must be properly maintained in accordance with the rules and practice of good forestry.

If you agree to these conditions then you do not need to do anything as the Forestry Commission will deem the conditions as granted after 14 days. Please note that this does not constitute a felling licence and no felling should commence at this stage.

If you have any concerns regarding these conditions or require further information please contact Abby Buchannan.

Kind Regards,

Laura Smith
Operations Admin Officer

Forestry Commission
Operational Delivery Team

+44 (0)300 067 4420 (Bucks Horn Oak)

www.gov.uk/forestrycommission



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APPENDIX

2





Dear Planning Consultants,

My name is Zachary Lucas, and I operate Lucas Arborist from Knight's Place Farm Woodyard. I am writing to provide further information regarding the use of the site and the activities carried out by my company.

At present, we have a temporary scaffolding structure on the site, which is used solely in connection with the recycling, processing and drying of timber.

Lucas Arborist holds the necessary felling licence, which enables us to fell sweet chestnut within the Farm. The timber produced from this work is currently being processed into post-and-rail fencing, which is used on the Farm itself.

A Woodland Management Plan is also currently being developed in conjunction with the Forestry Commission. Once this plan is in place, my company will be continuously involved in carrying out the woodland management works and implementing the measures set out within the plan.

In terms of employment, I currently have two people employed alongside me to carry out the work at the Farm. This increases to four people during periods of felling activity, when additional labour is required.

I would also like to clarify that the area in question is used solely for the purposes of recycling, processing, drying and storing timber associated with the woodland management and arboriculture activities undertaken at the Farm.

I hope the above information is helpful in clarifying the nature and extent of the activities undertaken by Lucas Arborist at Knight's Place Farm. Should you require any further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Zachary Lucas
Director

Contact Number: 07735828726 Contact Email: info@lucasarborist.com
Company Trading Address: No 41 High Street, Rochester, Kent, ME11LN
Company Number: 16784733